

As Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD), I have witnessed the overwhelming need for affordable housing in our nation and advocated for programs to address that need.

According to the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, the United States lost 1.2 million affordable housing units between 1993 and 2003. Meanwhile, three quarters of households that are eligible for federal housing assistance by income level are not receiving it, and demand for affordable housing is increasing as Americans age.

Despite this large unmet need, there have been repeated attempts to cut funding for affordable housing programs. In my role as Chairman, I have worked to defend and improve these programs. Some examples of these very important programs include:

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program - Section 8 vouchers enable approximately one and a half million American families to live in safe and affordable housing. Since the vouchers can be used as credit towards private housing, they enable people to choose types of homes, locations, and neighborhoods that match their desires and needs. Hundreds of families throughout western and central Massachusetts currently use the Section 8 program.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) - The CDBG program awards funding to communities to retain and expand businesses, create jobs, and provide affordable housing. With a focus on vulnerable populations, as well as disaster assistance, CDBG provides the foundation for community-building throughout the First Congressional District and the nation.

HOPE VI Program - HOPE VI provides competitive grants to public housing authorities to revitalize neighborhoods where projects are deteriorating. Holyoke's Churchill neighborhood is one recipient of a HOPE VI grant and provides a firsthand example of the way the program can turn around a community.

Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH) - Nearly a quarter of all homeless people are veterans and VASH is the only federal program that specifically addresses

homelessness among this population. However, prior to 2008, VASH had not been funded since 1993. In Fiscal Year 2008, I added \$75 million to the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations bill: enough to help approximately 10,000 homeless veterans, including 70 right here in western and central Massachusetts.